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PACIFIC AND WESTERN LIVESTOCK AND MEAT TRADE REVIEW

SAN FRANCISCO, May 14, 1948 (USDA): Prices on livestock and meat have reached a rather sensitive position throughout the Pacific and Western area. The general advance which carried through a month or so and pushed wholesale beef and lamb prices fully \$5.00 to \$6.00 higher, has been encountering increasing resistance from the consuming side. However, producers who are now obtaining the season's best and cheapest gains from pasture feeding are not disposed to sell livestock except at firm or higher prices. One factor supporting this position is the difficulty of securing replacement stock. These conditions make for what in trade circles is regarded as a forced affair. With cattle and lambs in relatively short supply, packers are confronted with advancing prices and consequently must obtain higher returns from the meat.

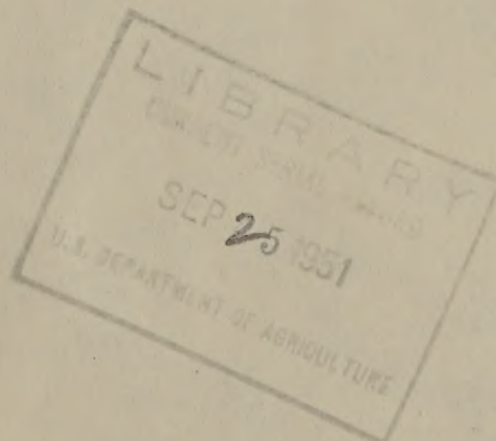
On most days of the week prices of livestock and meat were on the strong side, but resistance was more pronounced, except for the Pacific Northwest which suffered a break last week and recovered with a 50¢ to \$1.00 advance on cattle and lambs this week. In general trade for the whole Western area closed with a strong to 50¢ advance for the week on cattle; weak to \$1.00 lower on vealers and calves; mostly 50¢ higher on hogs and fully steady on spring lambs. An exception to the trend was a 50¢ to 75¢ decline on spring lambs at San Francisco. The movement of lambs through terminal markets has been very small. Nevertheless California packers have maintained a high level of slaughter by way of direct movement from ranches to packing plants. Much of this supply was previously contracted, there being very limited current selling at country points.

In the wholesale meat trade lamb and pork were in good supply, especially at California cities. At Los Angeles lamb declined \$1.00 to \$3.00 and the trade reflected some weakness at San Francisco. The trend on pork was a little stronger, while beef prices were steady to \$2.00 higher for the week. Good steer beef sold at wholesale from \$46.00 to \$49.00 at Coast cities; Good and Choice spring lamb from \$44.00 to \$52.00 with the higher end of the range in the Pacific Northwest.

Medium and Good slaughter steers ranged from \$24.00 to \$30.00 with a few loads of Good reaching \$31.00. Most cows were Cutter and Common grades of dairy breeding that sold from \$18.00 to \$21.00, while Medium and Good beef cows brought \$22.00 to \$25.00. Medium to Choice vealers and calves ranged from \$25.00 to \$33.00, some Medium and Good stock calves \$25.00 to \$28.00. Along the Coast Good and Choice spring lambs sold at \$24.75 to \$26.00, with Ogden quoting \$26.00 to \$28.00.

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PACIFIC AND WESTERN LIVESTOCK AND MEAT TRADE REVIEW

[San Francisco]

SAN FRANCISCO, MAY 28, 1948 (USDA) General weather conditions in the Far West caused a two-way trend in this weeks marketing of livestock. In the Northwest, late unusual spring rains and a quick thaw of the heavy snow pack caused a high run-off of water, which resulted in one of the worst floods in years at mid-week in the Columbia River basin. Many cattle ordinarily grazed in the low-lands of the Columbia and it's many tributaries are being offered on the market, largely as stockers. Producers throughout the Northwest are not inclined to market more than meager numbers of cattle as pastures are the best in many years. An abundance of grass seems assured for the next sixty days, at least. Both grass cattle and spring lambs will be involved in a late movement. Along the North Coast of California, spring lambs are being delayed account recent rains and slow growth of pastures. In the two main interior valleys of California, dry windy weather accelerated the market movement. About 50 single decks of Good and Choice heavy spring lambs were loaded for the mid-west, making 150 single decks in two weeks.

Pacific Coast terminals had erratic hog markets, with Good and Choice mid-western hogs unevenly 25¢ higher at San Francisco to \$1.25 higher at Los Angeles, the main bulk clearing within a spread of \$25.00 to \$26.50, the latter at Portland.

The California markets operated entirely on spring lambs, the Good and Choice at \$25.00 to \$26.35, with Ogden reporting 101 lb. California spring lambs up to \$28.50, early in the week. Closing mid-western markets were sharply lower on old-crop lambs.

The cattle markets held relatively stable, except on Canner and Cutter cows which advanced \$1.00 as the week went along, regaining fully the opening losses. North Portland was about the only market indicating a dozen loads of dry-lot steers, with a top of \$31.00, with interior California points changing over to well-wintered Medium to Good grass-fat steers, not above \$30.00 per 100 pounds at San Francisco. Similarly Medium and Good grass fat range cows were offered freely at \$21.00 to \$23.50, occasionally a few young grass cows up to \$23.50 at San Francisco and Los Angeles. The main bulk of Canner and Cutter cows \$17.00 to \$20.00 this week.

Medium to Choice vealers were generally steady, with auction, terminal and car-lot country sales within the spread of \$27.00 to \$31.00, and seldom under 250 pounds average weight.

In the wholesale meat trade steer beef reached \$50.00 on a selective basis for Good under 600 pound carcasses at all three markets, to establish an all-time high. Good 700 to 800 pound steer beef fairly plentiful at \$45.00 to \$47.00. Good and Choice spring lamb mostly \$47.00 and down, losing \$2.00 over the week in California, but still around \$52.00 in the Northwest.
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